

IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~striketrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please AMEND claims 1, 3, 4, 7, 9, 13, 15 and 16 and ADD claims 19-21 in accordance with the following:

1. (Currently Amended) A document read-out apparatus having a document read-out function for reading out a document according to a first speech parameter, comprising:
a first specifying section ~~which specifies~~ configured to specify a keyword; and
a read-out section ~~which reads~~ configured to read out the document according to a second speech parameter which is variable and is different from the first speech parameter, until a keyword within the document.
2. (Original) The document read-out apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the first and second speech parameters respectively include at least one parameter selected from a group of a reproducing speed, volume and sound pitch.
3. (Currently Amended) The document read-out apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:
a second specifying section ~~which specifies~~ configured to variably specify the second speech parameter.
4. (Currently Amended) The document read-out apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:
a section ~~which carries~~ configured to carry out in advance at least a part of a speech data generating process with respect to the document for a document portion from the specified keyword and after, while the document is read out until the specified keyword; and
a section ~~which reads~~ configured to read out the document portion from the specified keyword and after according to the first speech parameter, based on a result of the speech data generating process which is carried out in advance.

5. (Original) The document read-out apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said read-out section carries out a speech synthesizing process which is included in the document read-out function or is independent of the document read-out function.

6. (Original) The document read-out apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein:
said first specifying section enables a keyword to be specified while the document is being read out according to the first speech parameter; and
said read-out section reads out the document according to the second speech parameter until the keyword which is specified while the document is being read out.

7. (Currently Amended) A document read-out method which uses a document read-out function for reading out a document according to a first speech parameter, comprising the steps of:

- (a) specifying a keyword; and
- (b) reading out the document according to a second speech parameter which is variable and is different from the first speech parameter, until a keyword within the document.

8. (Original) The document read-out method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the first and second speech parameters respectively include at least one parameter selected from a group of a reproducing speed, volume and sound pitch.

9. (Currently Amended) The document read-out method as claimed in claim 7, further comprising the step of:

- (c) variably specifying the second speech parameter.

10. (Original) The document read-out method as claimed in claim 7, further comprising the steps of:

- (c) carrying out in advance at least a part of a speech data generating process with respect to the document for a document portion from the specified keyword and after, while the document is read out until the specified keyword; and
- (d) reading out the document portion from the specified keyword and after according to the first speech parameter, based on a result of the speech data generating process which is carried out in advance.

11. (Original) The document read-out method as claimed in claim 7, wherein said step (b) carries out a speech synthesizing process which is included in the document read-out function or is independent of the document read-out function.

12. (Original) The document read-out method as claimed in claim 7, wherein:
said step (a) enables a keyword to be specified while the document is being read out according to the first speech parameter; and
said step (b) reads out the document according to the second speech parameter until the keyword which is specified while the document is being read out.

13. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium which stores a document read-out program for causing a computer to read out a document according to a first speech parameter, said document read-out program comprising:
a first specifying procedure which causes the computer to specify a keyword; and
a read-out procedure which causes the computer to read out the document according to a second speech parameter which is variable and is different from the first speech parameter, until a keyword within the document.

14. (Original) The computer-readable storage medium as claimed in claim 13, wherein the first and second speech parameters respectively include at least one parameter selected from a group of a reproducing speed, volume and sound pitch.

15. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage medium as claimed in claim 13, ~~wherein~~ said document read-out program further comprising:
a second specifying procedure which causes the computer to variably specify the second speech parameter.

16. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage medium as claimed in claim 13, ~~wherein~~ said document read-out program further comprising:
a procedure which causes the computer to carry out in advance at least a part of a speech data generating process with respect to the document for a document portion from the specified keyword and after, while the document is read out until the specified keyword; and
a procedure which causes the computer to read out the document portion from the specified keyword and after according to the first speech parameter, based on a result of the

speech data generating process which is carried out in advance.

17. (Original) The computer-readable storage medium as claimed in claim 13, wherein said read-out procedure links to a speech synthesizing procedure which is included in the document read-out program or is independent of the document read-out program.

18. (Original) The computer-readable storage medium as claimed in claim 13, wherein:

said first specifying procedure enables the computer to specify a keyword while the document is being read out according to the first speech parameter; and

said read-out procedure causes the computer to read out the document according to the second speech parameter until the keyword which is specified while the document is being read out.

19. (New) The document read-out apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

a second specifying section configured to variably specify the second speech parameter with respect to the document while the document is being read out.

20. (New) The document read-out apparatus as claimed in claim 7, further comprising the steps of:

(c) variably specifying the second speech parameter with respect to the document while the document is being read out.

21. (New) The computer-readable storage medium as claimed in claim 13, said document read-out program further comprising:

a second specifying procedure which causes the computer to variably specify the second speech parameter with respect to the document while the document is being read out.